

Final thoughts of a pair of Colossi

Only twelve years separate the first performances of *The Tales of Hoffmann* and *Falstaff*, each of which is not just a supreme example of its creator's mature genius, but his valedictory opera too. As it happens, the first efforts of Jacque Offenbach and Giuseppe Verdi appeared in the same year, 1839, and each man went on to bestride his particular genre of music-theatre like a colossus during the second half of the nineteenth century. At first glance, the German-born Frenchman's output of some 115 stage works looks more impressive than the Italian's mere twenty-eight. But, whilst Offenbach has bequeathed us a handful of tuneful comic gems – usually with brilliantly satirical libretti by the gifted Meilac and Halévy – alongside the posthumously produced *Hoffmann*, his output comprised mainly very short one-acters, as brief in their staying power as they were in length. Verdi's legacy of full length works, on the other hand, is still with us and includes more universally accepted, and still performed, masterpieces of opera than any other composer in any age. And, although *Falstaff* was only Verdi's second foray into the world of comic opera, and that some fifty-two and a half years after the disaster of *Un giorno di regno*, it is now recognised as the most sophisticated *opera buffa* of them all.

Tatyana Poluektova as
Tatyana in *Eugene Onegin*
(see page 7).



OPERA
IRELAND

PRESENTS

The Tales of Hoffmann (Offenbach)

Sung in French, with English surtitles

With: Jean-Pierre Furlan, Ana Camelia Stefanescu, Regina Nathan, Mary Ann McCormick, Marianne Rorholm, Deirdre Cooling-Nolan, Laurence Albert, Andre Gregoire, Jean J Cubaynes, Camille Reno; c. Claude Schnitzler; p. Jöel Lauwers; d. Louis Desiré.

April 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26, 1998 at 7:30 pm.

Falstaff (Verdi)

Sung in Italian, with English surtitles.

With: Helmut Berger-Tuna, Anne Margarethe Dahl, Daniella Lojarro, Hanna Schaer, Kari Hamnøy, Jean-Luc Viala, Mark Acito, William Saetre, Richard Byrne, Gerard O'Connor; c. Antonello Allemandi; p. Dieter Kaegi; d. Stefanie Pasterkamp.

April 19, 21, 23 and 25, 1998 at 7:30 pm.

Opera Ireland Chorus (Chorus Master: Fergus Sheil).
RTÉ Concert Orchestra.
Gaiety Theatre, Dublin.



The Love of Three Figments

'I shall die with a tune on the tip of my pen',

Jacques Offenbach is quoted as having said to a colleague who accused him of being what we would nowadays probably call a workaholic. And how prophetic those words would turn out to be. The master of opéra-bouffe did indeed die while still working on the score of *The Tales of Hoffmann*, the work that was intended to fulfil his lifelong ambition of making a mark in the world of serious opera.

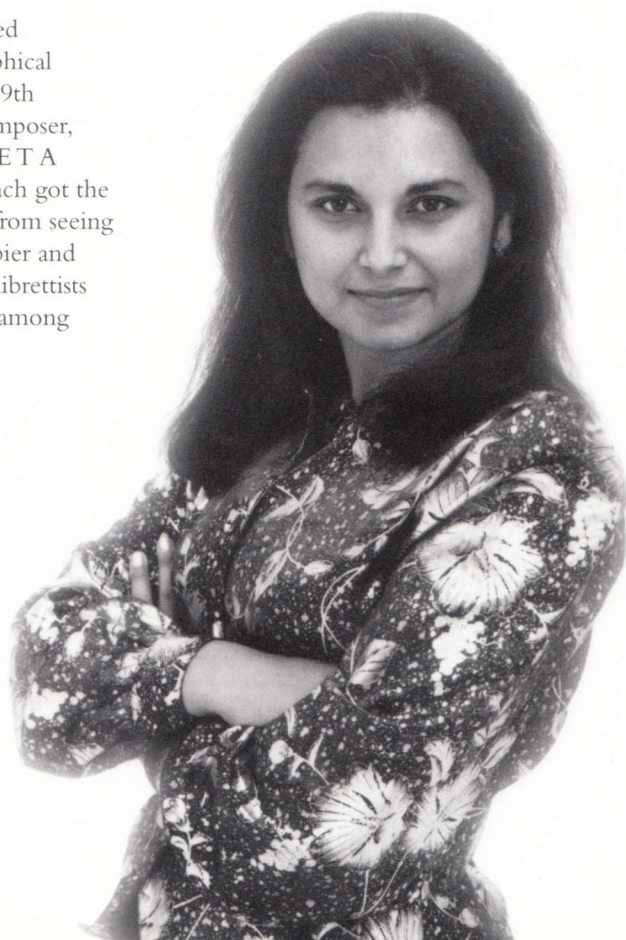
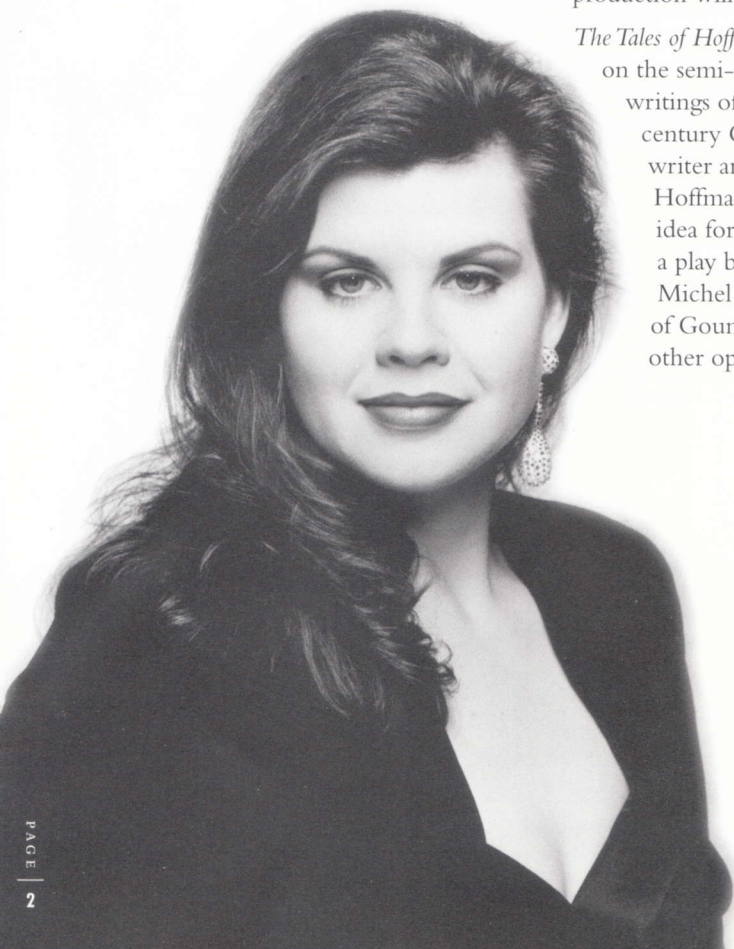
Because he wasn't around to oversee its production and fine-tune the work into a definitive version, as was his wont, Offenbach's last creation went out into the world in a compromise version that omitted quite a lot of the original score, yet managed to find room for some music that Offenbach didn't actually write. Offenbach had been commissioned by the Théâtre de la Gaîté-Lyrique to write a through-composed work with recitatives and a baritone in the title role.

But when the Gaîté-Lyrique went bankrupt and the piece was taken on by the Opéra-Comique, he had re-fashion the half-finished work into the standard opéra-comique format of separate numbers, spoken dialogue and a tenor hero. And all of this had to be done by the dying composer at feverish pace.

The unfinished work was prepared for staging by the ubiquitous Ernest Guiraud, who had also written the recitatives for Bizet's *Carmen*, and eventually premiered on 10 February 1881. The standard performing text, the one published by Choudens and used for most performances and recordings until the mid-1970s, evolved during the early years of the present century. In 1977, a completely new critical edition prepared by the German musicologist Fritz Oeser was published. This is the version on which Opera Ireland's new production will be based.

The Tales of Hoffmann is based on the semi-autobiographical writings of the early 19th century German composer, writer and fantasist E T A Hoffmann. Offenbach got the idea for the opera from seeing a play by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, the librettists of Gounod's *Faust*, among other operas.

The opera is framed by a prologue and epilogue which finds a drink-addled Hoffmann, with his companion Nicklausse and a band of students, in a Nürnberg tavern. Frustrated in his current love affair with the opera singer Stella, Hoffmann reflects on three old loves, all figments of his imagination. The central acts are devoted to presenting these affairs in flashback. First, there is his infatuation with the pretty young Olympia, who turns out to be merely a mechanical doll invented by her 'father' Spalanzani. Then comes his love for the frail Antonia, an embryo prima donna who, through illness, is forbidden to sing. Finally, in the Venice act, we witness his desertion by the courtesan Giulietta after she has first bewitched Hoffmann and then deprived him of his soul by means of a magic diamond.

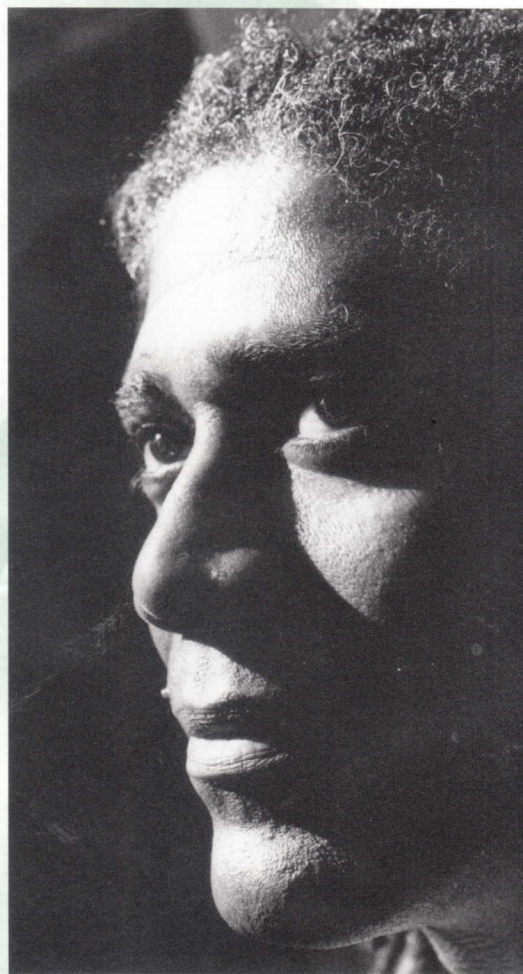


Of course, the three women are merely the demented poet's dreamt-up alter-egos of Stella, just as the demonic adversaries who thwart Hoffmann in each case are simply distorted images of the poet's rival for Stella's favours, one Councillor Lindorf. And all of this fantasy is wrapped up in a succession of ear-enchanting melodies that only the man dubbed 'the Mozart of the Boulevards' could have created.

Opera Ireland's new production of *The Tales of Hoffmann*, which will feature music never before heard in a production of the opera in this country, will be conducted by Claude Schnitzler, directed by Jöel Lauwers and designed by Louis Desiré.

Jean-Pierre Furlan will sing the title role and his three fantasy lovers will be sung by Ana Camelia Stefanescu as Olympia, Regina Nathan as Antonia and Mary Ann McCormick, the rich-toned Olga in the recent *Onegin*, as Giulietta. Hoffmann's four adversaries will be sung, as the composer intended, by a single artist, the American bass-baritone Laurence Albert. Nicklausse, a 'trousers' role, will be sung by Marianne Rørholm, and Dublin mezzo Deirdre Cooling-Nolan will be heard as the ghostly voice of Antonia's mother.

The Tales of Hoffmann will be sung in French with English surtitles. There will be five performances, on April 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26, 1998 at 7:30 pm.



Far left: Mary Ann McCormick
Left: Regina Nathan
Right: Ann Camelia Stefanescu
Far right: Jean-Pierre Furlan
Top right: Laurence Albert

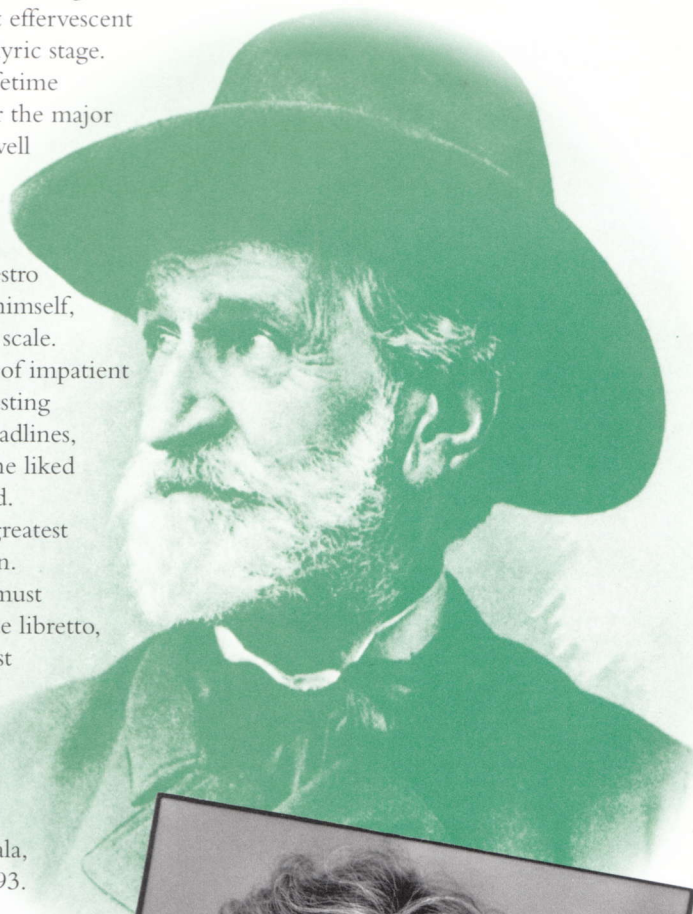
Verdi's Last Laugh

'I am not only witty in myself, but the cause that wit is in other men.'

Thus does Sir John Falstaff eulogise himself in Shakespeare's *Henry IV, Part 2*. The outrageous rogue who provided comic relief in both of the historical *Henry IV* plays was also taken out of retirement, as well as out of period – some say at the behest of Elizabeth I – to re-appear in the comedy *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Moreover, Sir John is the protagonist of at least fifteen operas, as well as the subject of a symphonic study by Elgar. And he was an inspired choice of character with which to round out, as it were, the career of the greatest of all the Italian opera composers.

Giuseppe Verdi was nearly eighty when he turned, yet again, to his beloved Shakespeare for source material. He already had twenty-seven operas to his name, including settings of two other Shakespeare plays. For many, this would surely have been enough. Yet, in what Arrigo Boito referred to as Verdi's 'Olympian old age', the venerable

maestro summoned up the energies to create one of the most effervescent operas ever to grace the lyric stage. Verdi had spent a long lifetime fulfilling commissions for the major opera houses of Italy as well as those in places as far away as London, Paris, St Petersburg and Cairo. But the cunning old maestro wrote this last opera for himself, and within his own time scale. Freed from the demands of impatient impresarios, with their casting problems and pressing deadlines, he could take as long as he liked over the work, and he did. The result is one of the greatest comic operas ever written. And much of the credit must go to Arrigo Boito, whose libretto, which is possibly the most sophisticated one in all Italian opera, inspired Verdi to write this warmly autumnal masterpiece which had its premiere at La Scala, Milan, on 9 February, 1893.



The music of *Falstaff* is a joy from start to finish. The efforts of the fat knight to woo the merry wives, and the scheming devices employed by these ladies to turn the tables on him, are depicted by a score that bristles with energetic, high-speed ensembles and stunning finales, enhanced by incredibly rich orchestral textures and a flow of seamless melody. But there is also plenty of tenderness and grace, especially in the music of the young lovers, Nanetta and Fenton. Indeed, nowhere in all of Verdi is there anything to match Nanetta's enchanting fairy song in the final scene in Windsor Forest. Then there is the central figure – and a very large figure he is, too – the amorous old sack-swilling knight himself. Sir John Falstaff is one of the greatest of Shakespeare's comic rogues, and Verdi's musicalisation of the portly protagonist is masterly. Unlike Falstaff's girth, the opera itself is modest in length; but it is a work strong on attention to dramatic detail and a source of immense satisfaction to all who are lucky enough to experience its magic.

Opera Ireland's new production of this late-Verdi masterpiece will be conducted by Antonello Allemandi and directed by the company's Artistic Director, Dieter Kaegi, in sets and costumes, designed by Stefanie Pasterkamp. The internationally renowned Austrian bass Helmut Berger-Tuna, who scored a personal triumph as Baron Ochs in Kaegi's production of *Der Rosenkavalier* in Seattle recently, will sing the title role. The merry wives will be Anne Margarethe Dahl as Alice Ford and Kari Hamnøy as Meg Page,



with Hanna Schaer as the conniving Mistress Quickly. Alice's jealous husband Ford will be sung by American baritone Richard Byrne and the young lovers, Nanetta and Fenton, by Turin-born soprano Daniella Lojarro and the distinguished French tenor Jean-Luc Viala. Viala, incidentally, appeared in Dublin at the start of his career as Rodolfo in the 1987 DGOS production of *La Bohème*.

Falstaff will be sung in Italian, with English surtitles. There will be four performances, on April 19, 21, 23 and 25, 1998 at 7:30 pm.



Falstaff

Far left: Daniella Lojarro
Left: Hanna Schaer
Top: Helmut Berger-Tuna
Right: Anne Margarethe Dahl

The Merry Widow

"A double bravo. The Merry Widow ... is one of the truly great comic operas and to perform it in the original high keys with the proper orchestral score is like viewing a heavily restored painting. It was an evening of pure delight that sent one into the street on a musical high."

SUNDAY TRIBUNE

"Central to the work is the widow herself... sung with style and compassion by Alwyn Mellor."

IRISH NEWS

"Alwyn Mellor's vivid presence and rich voice..."

IRISH INDEPENDENT

A Double

What the critics

"Stephen Brennan as the sly Njegus ... is a splendid comic creation"

SUNDAY INDEPENDENT

"The large cast involved quite a number of Irish singers and actors ... with a remarkable performance by Galway bass Gerard O'Connor as the beleaguered Ambassador..."

SUNDAY TRIBUNE

"Stephen Brennan's hilariously winning deliverance of the Shakespearean fool-type role of Njegus stole the show..."

EXAMINER

"Alwyn Mellor was flawless ... Count Danilo Danilovitch (was) played with wonderful abandon and suavity by American tenor Patrick Raftery. The timbre of their duets touched exactly those parts that refuse to surrender in a losing battle with the feelings."

EXAMINER

"The large chorus sang brilliantly."

IRISH INDEPENDENT

"For Alan Stanford it marks his first foray into music and he makes the transition from theatre with surprising ease..."

SUNDAY INDEPENDENT

"The conducting of the remarkable 23-year-old Philippe Jordan indicates a major new talent about to burst on the operatic scene..."

SUNDAY TRIBUNE

"Philippe Jordan gave a cracking performance of Lehar's remarkable confection."

IRISH NEWS

"Opera Ireland imported dancers from Paris to add extra brio and erotic charge. The sequence certainly sparkles and the girls inject real vibrancy into the scene."

SUNDAY INDEPENDENT

"Alan Stanford... the night truly belonged to him. There was a vibrancy and authentic animation in the interaction between all those on the stage."

EXAMINER

"Susanne Elmark's Valencienne was a pert and vivacious presence."

IRISH TIMES



Bravo

said about *The Merry Widow* and *Eugene Onegin*

"In a brilliantly imaginative staging (of Eugene Onegin), Opera Ireland presents an elegantly dressed, splendidly lighted production by James Robinson..."

IRISH INDEPENDENT

"Tatyana is played with spell-binding insight by Tatyana Poluektova."

IRISH TIMES

"... her Letter Scene is undoubtedly the high point of a performance that I've yet to see equalled in this opera."

SUNDAY INDEPENDENT

"John Hancock's Onegin, sung with a rich and ardent baritone, was well paced, and the mezzo Mary Ann McCormick was a superb Olga."

IRISH NEWS

"Bruno Schwengl's settings were breath-taking ... visually this was one of the most brilliant stagings the company has ever achieved, with wonderful lighting from Adam Silverman."

SUNDAY TRIBUNE

"The sets combined elegance and a feel for what it must have been like in Russia in Pushkin's time."

IRISH TIMES

"Vadim Munster's direction of the RTÉ Concert Orchestra was outstanding and it played superbly for him."

SUNDAY TRIBUNE

"Hancock encapsulates the aloofness of the titular figure to a tee. Equally, he is able to switch into the humbling pain of his error in the last act."

EXAMINER



"The tenor of Ivan Choupenitch was quite beautiful in Lensky's death aria..."

IRISH INDEPENDENT

"Michael Druitt merits a special mention for his ... gentle delivery of his melodic aria."

SUNDAY INDEPENDENT

Producer James Robinson did not miss a trick; and he was ably supported by Schwengl's stunning, almost abstract set..."

IRISH NEWS

"A special word of praise must be given to the Opera Ireland Chorus, chorus master Fergus Sheil, who sang with a full-blooded tone that made the Peasants' Chorus sound quite Russian in its fervour."

IRISH TIMES



Inset left: Patrick Raftery

Top right: Tatyana Poluektova and John Hancock

Right: Ivan Choupenitch and Mary Ann McCormick

Eugene Onegin

Tony Hughes bows out

Professor Anthony Hughes, who has stepped down from his position as President of Opera Ireland, was only the second holder of the office in the company's 56-year existence. He became President in 1967, following the death of his predecessor, Dr John Larchet, who had been one of the founders of the Dublin Grand Opera Society back in 1941.

"Tony was an enthusiastic supporter and advisor during his thirty years in office" says former Chairman Donnie Potter. "His regal presence, and that of his wife Nuala, will be missed, especially on gala nights, when he and Nuala were always on hand to welcome guests and members gracefully and warmly. Among the many dignitaries he welcomed were no fewer than six Presidents of Ireland."

Anthony Hughes, who is UCD's Professor of Music Emeritus, studied initially at the RIAM on scholarships for piano with Dina Copeman, organ with George Hewson and harmony and counterpoint with John F Larchet, who he was to succeed eventually as President of the then

DGOS. After taking a First Class Honours B.Mus. degree at UCD he went to the Vienna State Academy of Music where he took part in master classes for piano with Bruno Seidlhofer and for composition with Karl Schiske. Back home, he consolidated his academic qualifications by taking his Doctorate of Music in 1955. He has since held many important teaching positions, including that of Piano Professor at the RIAM, Visiting Professor at the University of Santa Clara in California and, of course, Professor of Music at UCD, a post he held from 1958 until his retirement in 1991.

During his career as a pianist, which began in 1949, he gave recitals and broadcast performances in Ireland, England, France, Austria and Czechoslovakia. As a soloist with orchestra, he played concertos under such eminent conductors as Edmund Appia, Jean Martinon, Milan Horvat, Giuseppe Patané and Tibor Paul.

He gave the premier performances of concertos by A J Potter and Gerard Victory as well as introducing to this country a Piano Concertino by Elizabeth Maconchy and Frank Martin's Ballade for Piano and orchestra. He has also played a considerable amount of chamber music and accompanied many fine string players and singers. In 1955 he was awarded the Arnold Bax Gold medal for performance of modern music.

Professor Hughes is also highly-regarded outside the world of academia for his lectures on a wide variety of musical matters.

In various national cultural institutes, in university and college music societies, his enthusiasm for whatever his subject is on the occasion has been responsible for launching many a life-long passion, including the present writer's unquenchable love affair with the operas of Wagner and Richard Strauss.

J.A.



President Patrick Hillery was one of six Presidents of Ireland welcomed to opera gala nights by Anthony Hughes during his thirty years as President of the DGOS and Opera Ireland. (l to r) President Hillery, Dr Maeve Hillery, Mrs Nuala Hughes, Prof. Anthony Hughes.

Musical Chairs

Frank O'Rourke (left), who has retired following his second two-year term, the maximum allowed, as Chairman of Opera Ireland. Eileen O'Mara Walsh (right) is the new Chairwoman of the Board.



New Chairwoman has opera in her blood

Eileen O'Mara Walsh, who has taken over the Chair at Opera Ireland, is a woman with opera in her blood. Her grandfather was Joseph O'Mara, the Limerick-born dramatic tenor who went on to found the famous O'Mara Opera Company.

The new Opera Ireland Chairwoman is Managing Director of O'Mara Travel Company, and she has worked in travel and tourism for over twenty years. She is also Chairwoman of Heritage Island Ltd, which was established in 1992 to promote Ireland's major tourism attractions, and has been Chairwoman of Forbairt since it was set up by the government in 1994.

President McAleese honours Opera Ireland

The President, Mary McAleese, has accepted Opera Ireland's invitation to become its Patron. President McAleese is the seventh President of Ireland to honour the company in this way.

From 1984 to 1991 she was Chairwoman of Great Southern Hotels and continues to serve on the Board. She is also a former director of Aer Lingus plc and was the founding chairwoman of the Irish Tourist Industry Confederation.

In addition to her family connection with the world of opera, her interests include theatre, the visual arts and current affairs.

An Opera House for Dublin?

Opera-going has been a feature of Dublin life for more than two-hundred years. The first opera ever seen in Ireland, Scolari's *La Cascina*, was put on in 1761 at the Smock Alley Theatre, which was situated near the south bank of the Liffey, on the site until recently occupied by the church of Saints Michael and John. *La Cascina* was followed a year later by Galuppi's bucolic comedy *Il filosofo di campagna* and Cimarosa's delightful one-man curtain-raiser, *Il maestro di cappella*. When these two works were last seen here, in 1959, they were given at the Gaiety Theatre, which was then, as it is today, the only opera-friendly venue in the city. Now, it seems, there is a possibility that we may be deprived of this facility, leaving us not only the

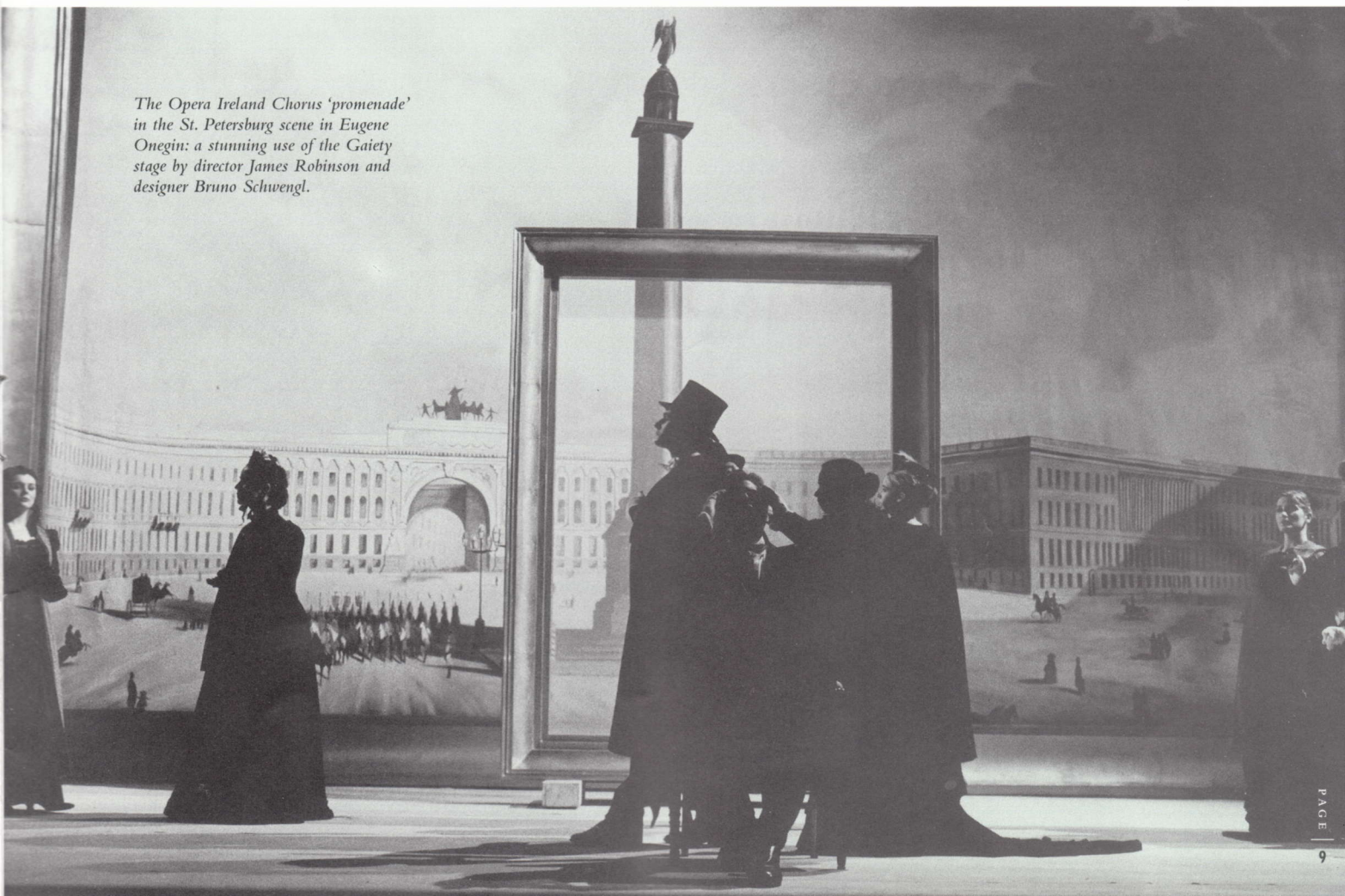
only European capital with no opera house, but the only one with no suitable venue for music-theatre of any kind.

The Arts Council has submitted proposals for a performing arts complex to be built in Dublin's erstwhile dockland as a millennium celebration gesture; but the idea has been cold-shouldered by some of the main potential users of such a centre; and, even if the project were to go ahead, it would not be up and running for quite some time. A more immediate solution, as far as the staging of opera is concerned, would be for the City, if not the State, to purchase the rapidly decaying Gaiety and refurbish it as a suitably-equipped modern opera house. A small opera house, maybe, but not all that small.

A study already carried out has established that the Gaiety's stage and orchestra pit can be enlarged. The theatre's auditorium will never be able to hold much more than its present capacity but, as Opera Ireland's Artistic Director, Dieter Kaegi, points out, that is on a par with many of the opera houses in cities in Germany and elsewhere in mainland Europe.

Opera in Dublin has had its ups and downs, its fallow years and its seasons of plenty. The history of the genre here makes a fascinating topic for discussion. But unless something is done to create a permanent home for it, and done quickly, that's all opera here will be in the not-too-distant future. History!

The Opera Ireland Chorus 'promenade' in the St. Petersburg scene in Eugene Onegin: a stunning use of the Gaiety stage by director James Robinson and designer Bruno Schwengl.



European Opera Festivals 1998

Information as available at end of January

BERLIN, GERMANY

Staatsoper unter den Linden Festtag,

April 5-16

Berlin-Parkett Foyer, Unter den Linden 7,
10109 Berlin, Germany
Tel: 0049 30 34 38 401; Fax: 0049 30 34 38 455
DIE MEISTERSINGER (Wagner)
DER FREISCHÜTZ

FLORENCE, ITALY

Maggio Musicale: **April 21-June 12**

Tel: 0039 55 211 158; Fax: 0039 55 277 9410

LADY MACBETH OF MTSENSK
(Shostakovich)
LE COMTE ORY (Rossini)
WOZZECK (Berg)
WOZZECK (Gurlitt)

DRESDEN, GERMANY

May 16-June 1

Postfach 20 27 23, 01219 Dresden

Tel: 0048 351 471 50 97;

Fax: 0049 351 471 78 96

L'EURIDICE (Peri)

JENUFA (Janacek)

FRIEDENSTAG (Strauss)

L'ITALIANA IN ALGERI (Rossini)

L'ORFEO (Monteverdi)

AIDA (Verdi)

THOMAS CHATTERTON (Pinscher)

FARINELLI (Matthus)

DAFNE (Bontempi)

I CAPULETTI E I MONTECCHI (Bellini)

GLYNDEBOURNE, ENGLAND

May 21-August 28

Glyndebourne, Lewes, East Sussex BN8 5UU

Tel: 0044 1273 813 813; Fax: 0044 1273 812 686

COSÌ FAN TUTTE (Mozart)

KATYA KABANOVA (Janacek)

RODELINDA (Handel)

SIMON BOCCANEGRA (Verdi)

CAPRICCIO (Strauss)

MANON LESCAUT (Puccini)

LE COMTE ORY (Rossini)

MUNICH, GERMANY

June 25-July 31

Maximilianstrasse 11, D 80539 München

Fax: 0049 89 2185 1903 (booking only)

Tel: 0049 89 2185 1920 (information only)

Fax: 0049 89 2185 1023 (information only)

TRISTAN UND ISOLDE (Wagner)

ANNA BOLENA (Donizetti)

ARIADNE AUF NAXOS (Strauss)

LA TRAVIATA (Verdi)

GIULIO CESARE (Handel)

THE BARTERED BRIDE (Smetana)

MACBETH (Verdi)

L'INCORONAZIONE DI POPPEA

(Monteverdi)

ELEKTRA (Strauss)

SIMON BOCCANEGRA (Verdi)

DON GIOVANNI (Mozart)

DIE WALKÜRE (Verdi)

LE NOZZE DI FIGARO (Mozart)

AIDA (Verdi)

DIE MEISTERSINGER (Wagner)

AIX-EN-PROVENCE, FRANCE

July 3-31

Espace Forbin, 3 Place Rewald, 13160

Aix-en-Provence

Tel: 0033 4221 6969; Fax: 0033 4221 9165

DON GIOVANNI (Mozart)

DIDO AND AENEAS (Purcell)/CURLEW

RIVER (Britten)

L'ORFEO (Monteverdi)

DUKE BLUEBEARD'S CASTLE (Bartok)

SAVONLINNA, FINLAND

July 5-August 2

Olavinkatu 27, FIN-57130 Savonlinna

Tel: 00358 14 47 67 50;

Fax: 00358 15 47 67 540

Tannhäuser (Wagner)

PAGLIACCI (Leoncavallo)/CAVALLERIA

RUSTICANA (Mascagni)

LA FORZA DEL DESTINO (Verdi)

PETER GRIMES (Britten)

I MASNADIERI (Verdi)

BREGENZ, AUSTRIA

July 6-August 20

Kartenbüro, A-6901, Bregenz

Tel: 0043 5574 4920224;

Fax: 0043 5574 4920228

PORGY AND BESS (Gershwin)

L'AMORE DEI TRE RE (Montemezzi)

NACHT (Haas)

VERONA, ITALY

July 5-August 31

Piazza Biza 28, Verona

Tel: 0039 94 800 5151; Fax: 0039 94 801 3287

AIDA (Verdi)

NABUCCO (Verdi)

TOSCA (Puccini)

RIGOLETTO (Verdi)

MACERATA, ITALY

July 18-August 14

Associazione Arena Sferisterio,

Via Santa Maria della Porta 65,

62100 Macerata

Tel: 0039 733 261 334/5; Fax: 0039 733 233 50

TURANDOT (Puccini)

FALSTAFF (Verdi)

CARMEN (Bizet)

SALZBURG, AUSTRIA

July 24-August 30

A-5010 Salzburg, Postfach 140

Tel: 0043 662 84 4501; Fax: 0043 662 84 6682

AUFSTIEG UND FALL DER STADT

MAHAGONNY (Weill)

KATYA KABANOVA (Janacek)

DON CARLOS (Verdi)

DIE ENTFÜHRUNG AUS DEM SERAIL

(Mozart)

LE NOZZE DI FIGARO (Mozart)

KING ROGER (Szymanowski)

PARSIFAL (Wagner)

FIDELIO (Beethoven)

SAINT FRANCOIS D'ASSISE (Messiaen)

BAYREUTH, GERMANY

July 25-August 28

Postbox 10 02 62, D-95402, Bayreuth

Tel: 0049 921 202 21

WAGNER FESTIVAL

DIE FLIEGENDE HOLLÄNDER

Die Meistersinger von Nürnberg

Der Ring des Nibelungen

Parsifal

PESARO, ITALY

August 8-22

Via Rossini, Pasero

Tel: 0039 721 301 61; Fax: 0039 721 309 79

ROSSINI FESTIVAL

LA CENERENTOLA

OTELLO

ISABELLA (a version of L'italiana in Algeri for teenage audiences, arranged by Azio Corghi)

WEXFORD, IRELAND

October 15-November 1

Theatre Royal, Wexford

Tel: 053 22400; Fax: 053 24289

FOSCA (Gomes)

SARLATAN (Haas)

I CAVALIERI DI EKEBÙ (Zandonai)

Box office information for festivals which have not yet announced their 1998 programmes.

AMSTERDAM, NETHERLANDS

May-June

Waterlooplein 22, 1011 PG Amsterdam

Tel: 0031 20 551 8922; Fax: 0031 20 551 8311

VIENNA, AUSTRIA

Vienna Festival: May-June

Lahárgasse 11, 1060 Vienna

Tel: 0043 586 1676; Fax: 0043 586 167 649

DROTTHNINGHOLM, SWEDEN

July-August

Tel: 0046 8 660 8225; Fax: 0046 8 665 1473

ORANGE, FRANCE

July-August

BP 205, 18 Place Silvain, 84107 Orange

Tel: 0033 9034 2424; Fax: 0033 9034 8767

Irish Opera Diary

Spring 1998. Information as available at end of January.

Opera Theatre Company

COSÌ FANTUTTE (Mozart)

Mary Callan Clarke, Deborah Hawksley, Mary Nelson, Donal Byrne, Joe Corbett, Philip O'Reilly. c. Brad Cohen; p. James Conway; d. Arthur Duff; l. Mark Waldron

Booking (01) 679 4962

Dublin, RDS, Feb. 11 & 12, 8 pm

Athlone, Dean Crowe Hall, Feb. 14, 8 pm

Limerick, Belltable Arts Centre, Feb. 17, 8 pm

Tralee, Siamsa Tíre, Feb. 19, 8 pm

Cork, Everyman palace, Feb. 21, 8 pm

Moldovan National Opera Irish tour

NORMA (Bellini)

Sung in Italian, with English surtitles

Dublin, National Concert Hall,

Feb. 17, 7.30 pm

Cork Opera House, Feb. 19, 7.30 pm

Limerick, University Concert Hall,

Feb. 22, 7.30 pm

Belfast, Waterfront Hall, Feb. 24, 8 pm

CARMEN (Bizet)

Sung in French, with English surtitles

Cork Opera House, Feb. 18 & 19, 7.30 pm

Limerick, University Concert Hall,

Feb. 20 & 21, 7.30 pm

Clonmel, Regal Theatre, Feb. 23, 7.30 pm

Opera Northern Ireland

Belfast, Grand Opera House

Booking (081232) 241919

HANSEL & GRETEL (Humperdink)

Fiona Campbell, Diana Gilchrist, Charlotte Page, Patricia Boylan, Elizabeth Hetherington, Robert Poulton; c. Graham Jackson; p. Aidan Long; d. Lez Brotherson; l. John Bishop.

Mar. 1 at 2.30 pm; Mar. 3, 5 & 7 at 7.30 pm

Russian Night with Galina Gorchakova,

Mar. 6, 7.30 pm

Opera Lecture

Dublin, Mercer Hotel at the

College of Surgeons, Mar. 9 at 8 pm

A DAUGHTER GONE TO THE BAD:

The rise and fall of French opérette

Opera for Europe

LUCIO SILLA (Mozart)

Dublin: National Concert Hall,

Mar. 24, 7.30 pm

Cork: Opera House, Mar. 26, 8 pm

Belfast, Grand Opera House, Mar. 28, 7.45 pm

Opera Lecture

Dublin, Mercer Hotel, April 13 at 8 pm

THE FAT MAN AND THE FANTASIST:

a preview of Verdi's *Falstaff* and Offenbach's

Tales of Hoffmann

Opera Ireland

Dublin, Gaiety Theatre

Booking (01) 677 1717

April 18, 20, 22, 24 and 26, 1998 at 7.30 pm.

THE TALES OF HOFFMANN (Offenbach)

Sung in French, with English surtitles

Jean-Pierre Furlan, Ana Camelia Stefanescu,

Regina Nathan, Mary Ann McCormick,

Marianne Rørholm, Deirdre Cooling-Nolan,

Laurence Albert, Andre Gregoire,

Jean J. Cubaynes, Camille Reno; c. Claude

Schnitzler; p. Joël Lauwers; d. Louis Desiré.

April 19, 21, 23 and 25, 1998 at 7.30 pm.

FALSTAFF (Verdi)

Sung in Italian, with English surtitles

Helmuth Berger-Tuna, Anne Margarethe Dahl,

Daniella Lojarro, Hanna Schaer, Kari

Hamnoy, Jean-Luc Viala, Mark Acito, William

Saetre, Richard Byrne, Gerard O'Connor;

c. Antonello Allemandi; p. Dieter Kaegi;

d. Stefanie Pasterkamp.

European Opera Players

Limerick, University Hall,

April 23, 8.00 pm

DON GIOVANNI (Mozart)

Rebecca Nash, Hilary Dolamore,

Sarah Whyte, Ian Yem, Nyle P Wolfe,

Peter Grant, Owen Gilhooley, Tim Mirfin;

c. Martin Barrett.

Opera Lecture

Dublin, Bank of Ireland Arts Centre

THE ART OF BEL CANTO

John Allen, Tuesday June 2, 8 pm

OPERA LECTURES

The remaining sessions in John Allen's series of popular opera lectures Mercer Hotel will be:

March 9

A DAUGHTER GONE TO THE BAD:

the rise and fall of French opérette

April 6

THE FAT MAN AND THE

FANTASIST:

a preview of Verdi's *Falstaff* and Offenbach's

Tales of Hoffmann

All of the lectures will take place on Monday

evenings at 8 pm in The Mercer Hotel,

Dublin, which is located on the corner of

Mercer Street and York Street.

OPERA IRELAND NEWS

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Production photos and back cover by

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Printed by Craftprint

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OPERA
IRELAND

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR OPERA IRELAND MEMBERS

As part of its ongoing commitment to improving the quality of service available to its members and at the same time increasing its potential audience, Opera Ireland is entering into a database-sharing agreement with Precision Marketing Information. One of the immediate outcomes of this is that the company's mailing list will be made available to organisations providing other music and related services. Any member who does not wish to have his or her name passed on should contact the Opera Ireland office on or before 28th February, 1998.



HIGH KICKERS!
*Merry Widow can-can dancers arrive
at Dublin Airport from Paris*